General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 113

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/577)*]

56/132. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/203 of 22 December 1995, 51/69 of 12 December 1996, 52/100 of 12 December 1997, 53/120 of 9 December 1998, 54/141 of 17 December 1999 and 55/71 of 4 December 2000,

Welcoming the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[1] and stressing the importance of the outcome of the special session, which has assessed the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[2] identified obstacles and challenges thereto and proposed actions and initiatives to overcome them and achieve full and accelerated implementation,

Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session are important contributions to the advancement of women worldwide in the achievement of gender equality and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned, as well as by non-governmental organizations,

Stressing the importance of strong, sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels in order to achieve full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Recognizing that the responsibility for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are

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[1] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Welcoming the increased integration of a gender perspective in the work of the United Nations, in particular in the outcomes of major United Nations conferences, special sessions, summit conferences and their follow-up processes,

Welcoming also the integration of a gender perspective in the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly, on human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), held in New York from 25 to 27 June 2001,[3] in particular the emphasis on the gender dimensions of the epidemic, and the recognition that gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental elements in the reduction of the vulnerability of women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS,

Welcoming further the integration of a gender perspective in the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held at Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September 2001, which recognized, inter alia, the multiple forms of discrimination faced by women and the need to apply a gender perspective in measures to eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Emphasizing the importance of the decision by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2001/41 of 26 July 2001, to devote the coordination segment of one of its substantive sessions, before 2005, to the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997,[4]

Welcoming the ministerial declaration on the role of the United Nations system in support of the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development, adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 18 July 2001 at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2001,[5] in which the Council recognized, inter alia, the need to promote the role of women in social and economic development, including by assuring their participation in political and economic life,

Reaffirming the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality, while noting the importance of the open debate entitled "Women and peace and security", held in the Security Council on 24 October 2000, and its outcome,

Welcoming the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime[6] and the Protocols thereto,[7]

1. *Reaffirms* the goals, objectives and commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and also in the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session;[1]

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[3] Resolution S-26/2, annex.

[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, para. 4.

[5] Ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/56/3/Rev.1), chap. III, para. 29.

[6] Resolution 55/25, annex I.

[7] Ibid., annexes II and III, and resolution 55/255, annex.

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[8]

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system within their respective mandates and all other relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to take effective action to achieve full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, as elaborated in the above-mentioned documents;

4. *Calls upon* Governments, in collaboration with relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to continue to facilitate the translation and dissemination of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session as broadly and as accessibly as possible;

5. *Strongly encourages* Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

6. *Welcomes* the integration of a gender perspective in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[9] and emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of and follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and in future reports on this subject;

7. *Reaffirms* its decision that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates and with General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and other relevant resolutions, constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that plays the primary role in the overall policy-making and follow-up and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

8. *Also reaffirms* that the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session will be undertaken within the framework of an integrated and coordinated follow-up to major international conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, and in this regard takes note of Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/21 of 26 July 2001 on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits;

9. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to intensify further its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all United Nations activities, building upon agreed conclusions 1997/2 adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997;[4]

10. *Invites* the Council to continue to further policy coordination and inter-agency cooperation towards the achievement of the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, including

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[8] A/56/319 and Add.1.

[9] See resolution 55/2.

by considering the dedication of specific segments of the Council to the advancement of women and implementation of the above-mentioned documents and by mainstreaming a gender perspective in all its work;

11. *Encourages* the Council to request the regional commissions, within their respective mandates and resources, to intensify efforts to build up a database, to be updated regularly, in which all programmes and projects carried out in their respective regions by agencies or organizations of the United Nations system are listed, and to facilitate their dissemination, as well as the evaluation of their impact on the empowerment of women through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

12. *Reaffirms* that the Commission on the Status of Women has a central role in assisting the Council in monitoring, assessing progress made in and accelerating, within the United Nations system, the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and in advising the Council thereon, encourages the Commission, in this regard, further to enhance its working methods in order to improve the effectiveness of its work and its catalytic role in ensuring the integration of a gender perspective in United Nations activities, taking into consideration the adoption by the Council of the multi-year programme of work of the Commission for 2002–2006,[10] and calls on the Commission and all involved to implement the programme of work;

13. *Recognizes* the importance attached to the regional and subregional monitoring of the global and regional platforms for action and of the implementation of the outcome of the twenty-third special session by regional commissions and other regional or subregional structures, within their mandates, in consultation with Governments, and calls for the promotion of further cooperation in that respect among Governments and, where appropriate, national machineries of the same region;

14. *Reaffirms* that, in order to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources for the developing countries, in particular those in Africa and the least developed countries, from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources, will also be required;

15. *Recognizes* that the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session in the countries with economies in transition requires continued national efforts and international cooperation and assistance;

16. *Reaffirms* that, in order to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, a reformulation of policies and reallocation of resources may be needed, but that some policy changes may not necessarily have financial implications;

17. *Recognizes* that the creation of an enabling environment at the national and international levels, including through the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making, is necessary to ensure the full participation of women in economic activities, and calls upon States to remove obstacles to the full

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[10] See Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/4.

implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

18. *Reaffirms* that, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, including through the work of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the maintenance of gender units and focal points;

19. *Also reaffirms* that United Nations bodies that focus on gender issues, such as the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, have an important role to play in the implementation of the objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

20. *Welcomes* the convening, in 2002, of the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held at Monterrey, Mexico, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held at Madrid, and the special session of the General Assembly on children, and urges Governments to integrate a gender perspective in the respective processes and outcome documents;

21. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made by all relevant organizations of the United Nations system in promoting the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution;

22. *Recognizes* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, and urges the United Nations system and Governments to make further efforts in this regard and to take steps to ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, as well as through the integration of a gender perspective into those United Nations processes;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all United Nations personnel and officials at Headquarters and in the field, especially in field operations, receive training so that they mainstream a gender perspective in their work, including gender impact analysis, and to ensure appropriate follow-up to such training;

24. *Requests* all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective;

25. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[11] to include information on measures taken to

[11] Resolution 34/180, annex.

implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 18 of the Convention;

26. *Welcomes* the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[12] and urges States parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

27. *Urges* Member States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime[6] and the Protocols thereto,[7] in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to disseminate the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session as widely as possible in all the official languages of the United Nations;

29. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system;

30. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century' ".

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

[12] Resolution 54/4, annex.

United Nations A/RES/56/133

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 114

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/578)*]

56/133. Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council decisions 2001/217 of 3 May 2001 and 2001/298 of 25 July 2001 concerning the enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Taking note also of the requests regarding the enlargement of the Executive Committee contained in the annex to the note verbale dated 21 January 1999 from the Permanent Mission of Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,[1] in the letter dated 3 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,[2] in the annex to the letter dated 20 April 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General[3] and in the note verbale dated 27 April 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,[4]

1. *Decides* to increase the number of members of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from fifty-seven to sixty-one States;

2. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to elect the additional members at its resumed organizational session for 2002.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

[1] E/1999/13.
[2] E/2001/4.
[3] E/2001/49.
[4] E/2001/52.

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 114

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/578)*]

56/134. Follow-up to the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 48/113 of 20 December 1993, 49/173 of 23 December 1994, 50/151 of 21 December 1995, 51/70 of 12 December 1996, 52/102 of 12 December 1997, 53/123 of 9 December 1998 and, in particular, 54/144 of 17 December 1999,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,[1]

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,[2]

Reaffirming the importance and continuing validity of the Programme of Action, adopted in 1996 by the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States,[3] as a basic guiding tool for future activities,

Recognizing the ongoing acuteness of the migration and displacement problems in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the necessity to follow up the Conference,

Recalling the decision of the Steering Group of the Conference at its fifth meeting to continue activities in the process entitled "Follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference on the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Migration and Asylum Issues" for a period of five years,

Welcoming the Work Plan for the Thematic Issues, prepared jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in

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[1] A/55/472.

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 12* (A/56/12).

[3] A/51/341 and Corr.1, appendix.

Europe and the Council of Europe in accordance with the recommendations adopted by the Steering Group at its fifth meeting,

Welcoming also the convening, at Kiev from 11 to 13 December 2000, of the first meeting of experts within the framework of the newly launched thematic process on citizenship and statelessness, as well as international efforts aimed at improving migration and border management, with due respect to refugee protection matters, and encouraging all lead agencies to continue to implement the Work Plan,

Reaffirming the view of the Conference that the primary responsibility for tackling population displacement problems lies with the affected countries themselves and that these issues are to be regarded as national priorities, while at the same time recognizing the need for enhancing international support for the national efforts of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States aimed at the effective implementation of such responsibilities within the framework of the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference,

Noting with satisfaction the efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in developing strategies and practical tools for more effective capacity-building in countries of origin and enhancing programmes to address the needs of various categories of concern to the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States,

Taking note of positive results emanating from the implementation of the Programme of Action,

Convinced of the necessity of further strengthening practical measures and of continuing to maintain the regional approach for the achievement of effective implementation of the Programme of Action,

Recalling that the protection and promotion of human rights and the strengthening of democratic institutions are essential to prevent mass population displacement,

Mindful that adherence to the principles and the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action should be facilitated and can be ensured only through cooperation and coordinated activities undertaken in this respect by all interested States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other actors,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;[2]

2. *Calls upon* the Governments of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to strengthen their efforts and mutual cooperation relating to the follow-up to the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States, and welcomes the positive results achieved by them in the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference;[3]

3. *Invites* all States that have not yet done so to accede to and implement fully the 1951 Convention[4] and the 1967 Protocol[5] relating to the Status of Refugees;

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[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[5] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

4. *Calls upon* States and interested international organizations, in a spirit of solidarity and burden-sharing, to provide appropriate forms and levels of support for activities undertaken in follow-up to the Programme of Action;

5. *Invites* international financial and other institutions to contribute to the financing of projects and programmes within the framework of such follow-up activities;

6. *Invites* the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States to intensify bilateral, subregional and regional cooperation in maintaining the balance of commitments and interests in such activities;

7. *Calls upon* the Governments of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States to continue to strengthen their commitment to the principles underpinning the Programme of Action, in particular principles of human rights and refugee protection, and to lend high-level political support to ensure the implementation of activities undertaken in follow-up to the Programme of Action;

8. *Invites* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to enhance their mutual relationship with other key international actors, such as the Council of Europe, the European Commission and human rights, development and financial institutions, in order better to address the wide-ranging and complex issues in activities undertaken in follow-up to the Programme of Action;

9. *Welcomes* the progress made in building civil society, in particular through the development of the non-governmental sector and the development of cooperation between non-governmental organizations and the Governments of a number of countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and notes in this regard the relationship between adherence to the principles of the Programme of Action and success in promoting civil society, especially in the field of human rights;

10. *Encourages* the involvement of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the follow-up to the Conference, and invites them to demonstrate stronger support for the process of multinational constructive dialogue among a wide range of countries concerned;

11. *Emphasizes* the necessity of undertaking follow-up activities to the Programme of Action in relation to ensuring respect for human rights as an important factor in the management of migration flows, the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and stability;

12. *Recognizes* the importance of taking measures, on the basis of strict adherence to all of the principles of international law, including humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, to prevent situations that lead to new flows of refugees, displaced persons and other forms of involuntary displacement;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the progress achieved in the implementation of activities undertaken in follow-up to the Programme of Action;

14. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-eighth session.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 114

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/578)*]

56/135. Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/77 of 4 December 2000,

Recalling also the provisions of its resolution 2312 (XXII) of 14 December 1967, by which it adopted the Declaration on Territorial Asylum,

Recalling further the Organization of African Unity Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa of 1969[1] and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,[2]

Recalling the Khartoum Declaration[3] and the Recommendations on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa[4] adopted by the Organization of African Unity at the ministerial meeting held at Khartoum on 13 and 14 December 1998,

Welcoming decision CM/Dec.598 (LXXIV) on the situation of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its seventy-fourth ordinary session, held at Lusaka from 5 to 8 July 2001,[5]

Welcoming also decision AHG/Dec.165 (XXXVII) on the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its thirty-seventh ordinary session, held at Lusaka from 9 to 11 July 2001,[6]

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1001, No. 14691.
[2] Ibid., vol. 1520, No. 26363.
[3] A/54/682, annex I.
[4] Ibid., annex II.
[5] See A/56/457, annex II.
[6] Ibid., annex I.

Noting that 2001 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,[7] which, together with the 1967 Protocol thereto,[8] as complemented by the Organization of African Unity Convention of 1969, remains the foundation of the international refugee protection regime in Africa,

Recognizing that the fundamental principles and rights embodied in those Conventions have provided a resilient protection regime within which millions of refugees have been able to find safety from armed conflicts and persecution,

Recalling the Comprehensive Implementation Plan adopted by the Special Meeting of Governmental and Non-Governmental Technical Experts convened by the Organization of African Unity and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at Conakry from 27 to 29 March 2000 on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Organization of African Unity Convention, and noting its endorsement by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its seventy-second ordinary session,[9]

Commending the First Ministerial Conference on Human Rights in Africa of the Organization of African Unity, held at Grand-Baie, Mauritius, from 12 to 16 April 1999, and recalling the attention paid to issues relevant to refugees and displaced persons in the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the Conference,

Recognizing the contributions made by African States to the development of regional standards for the protection of refugees and returnees, and noting with appreciation that countries of asylum are hosting refugees in a humanitarian spirit and in a spirit of African solidarity and brotherhood,

Recognizing also the need for States to address resolutely the root causes of forced displacement and to create conditions that facilitate durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons, and stressing in this regard the need for States to foster peace, stability and prosperity throughout the African continent,

Convinced of the need to strengthen the capacity of States to provide assistance to and protection for refugees, returnees and displaced persons and of the need for the international community, within the context of burden-sharing, to increase its material, financial and technical assistance to countries affected by refugees, returnees and displaced persons,

Acknowledging with appreciation that some assistance is already rendered by the international community to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and host countries in Africa,

Noting with great concern that, despite all the efforts deployed so far by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and others, the situation of refugees and displaced persons in Africa remains precarious,

Stressing that the provision of relief and assistance to African refugees by the international community should be on an equitable, non-discriminatory basis,

Considering that, among refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, women and children are the majority of the population affected by conflict and bear the brunt of atrocities and other consequences of conflict,

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[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[8] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

[9] See A/55/286, annex I, decision CM/Dec.531 (LXXII), para. 8.

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General[10] and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;[11]

2. *Notes with concern* that the declining socio-economic situation, compounded by political instability, internal strife, human rights violations and natural disasters, has led to increased numbers of refugees and displaced persons in some countries of Africa, and remains particularly concerned about the impact of large-scale refugee populations on the security, socio-economic situation and environment of countries of asylum;

3. *Encourages* African States to ensure the full implementation of and follow-up to the Comprehensive Implementation Plan adopted by the Special Meeting of Governmental and Non-Governmental Technical Experts convened by the Organization of African Unity and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at Conakry on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Organization of African Unity Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa of 1969;[1]

4. *Calls upon* States and other parties to armed conflict to observe scrupulously the letter and the spirit of international humanitarian law, bearing in mind that armed conflict is one of the principal causes of forced displacement in Africa;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* for the leadership shown by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees since he assumed office in January 2001, and commends the Office of the High Commissioner for the ongoing efforts, with the support of the international community, to assist African countries of asylum and to respond to the protection and assistance needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa;

6. *Notes* the Ministerial Meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, to be held at Geneva on 12 and 13 December 2001, and encourages African States parties to the Convention to participate actively in the event;

7. *Welcomes* the process of the Global Consultations on International Protection launched by the Office of the High Commissioner, which provides an important forum for open discussion on complex legal and operational protection issues, and in this context invites African States to continue to participate actively in this process so as to bring their regional perspective to bear, thus ensuring that adequate attention is paid to concerns that are specific to Africa;

8. *Reaffirms* that the 1951 Convention[7] and the 1967 Protocol[8] relating to the Status of Refugees, as complemented by the Organization of African Unity Convention of 1969, remain the foundation of the international refugee protection regime in Africa, encourages African States that have not yet done so to accede to those instruments, and calls upon States parties to the Conventions to reaffirm their commitment to their ideals and to respect and observe their provisions;

9. *Notes* the need for States to address the root causes of forced displacement in Africa, and calls upon African States, the international community and relevant United Nations organizations to take concrete action to meet the needs

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[10] A/56/335.

[11] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 12* (A/56/12).

of refugees, returnees and displaced persons for protection and assistance and to contribute generously to national projects and programmes aimed at alleviating their plight;

10. *Notes also* the link, inter alia, between human rights violations, poverty, natural disasters and environmental degradation and population displacement, and calls for redoubled and concerted efforts by States, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity, to promote and protect human rights for all and to address these problems;

11. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, within their respective mandates, in the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the ongoing mediation and conflict resolution efforts carried out by African States, the Organization of African Unity and subregional organizations, as well as the establishment of regional mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, and urges all relevant parties to address the humanitarian consequences of conflicts;

13. *Expresses its appreciation and strong support* for those African Governments and local populations that, in spite of the general deterioration of socio-economic and environmental conditions and overstretched national resources, continue to accept the additional burden imposed upon them by increasing numbers of refugees and displaced persons, in compliance with the relevant principles of asylum;

14. *Expresses its concern* about instances in which the fundamental principle of asylum is jeopardized by unlawful expulsion or refoulement or by threats to the life, physical security, integrity, dignity and well-being of refugees;

15. *Calls upon* States, in cooperation with international organizations, within their mandates, to take all necessary measures to ensure respect for the principles of refugee protection and, in particular, to ensure that the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps is not compromised by the presence or the activities of armed elements;

16. *Deplores* the deaths and injuries and other forms of violence sustained by staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and urges States, parties to conflict and all other relevant actors to take all necessary measures to protect activities related to humanitarian assistance, to prevent attacks on and kidnapping of national and international humanitarian workers and to ensure their safety and security, calls upon States to investigate fully any crimes committed against humanitarian personnel and bring to justice persons responsible for such crimes, and calls upon organizations and aid workers to abide by the national laws and regulations of the countries in which they operate;

17. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, the Organization of African Unity, subregional organizations and all African States, in conjunction with organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the international community, to strengthen and revitalize existing partnerships and forge new ones in support of the international refugee protection system;

18. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, the international community and other concerned entities to intensify their support to African Governments through appropriate capacity-building activities, including training of relevant officers, disseminating information about refugee instruments and principles, providing financial, technical and advisory services to accelerate the enactment or amendment and implementation of legislation relating to refugees, strengthening emergency response and enhancing capacities for the coordination of humanitarian activities;

19. *Reaffirms* the right of return and also the principle of voluntary repatriation, appeals to countries of origin and countries of asylum to create conditions that are conducive to voluntary repatriation, and recognizes that, while voluntary repatriation remains the pre-eminent solution, local integration and third-country resettlement, as appropriate, are also viable options for dealing with the situation of African refugees who, owing to prevailing circumstances in their respective countries of origin, are unable to return home;

20. *Notes with satisfaction* the voluntary return of millions of refugees to their homelands following the successful repatriation and reintegration operations carried out by the Office of the High Commissioner with the cooperation and collaboration of countries hosting refugees and countries of origin, and looks forward to other programmes to assist the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of all refugees in Africa;

21. *Appeals* to the international community to respond positively, in a spirit of solidarity and burden-sharing, to the third-country resettlement requests of African refugees, and notes with appreciation that some African countries have offered resettlement places for refugees;

22. *Welcomes* the programmes carried out by the Office of the High Commissioner with host Governments, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and the international community to address the environmental impact of refugee populations;

23. *Calls upon* the international donor community to provide material and financial assistance for the implementation of programmes intended for the rehabilitation of the environment and infrastructure affected by refugees in countries of asylum;

24. *Expresses its concern* about the long stay of refugees in certain African countries, and calls upon the Office of the High Commissioner to keep its programmes under review, in conformity with its mandate in the host countries, taking into account the increasing needs of refugees;

25. *Emphasizes* the need for the Office of the High Commissioner to collate statistics, on a regular basis, on the number of refugees living outside refugee camps in certain African countries, with a view to evaluating and addressing the needs of those refugees;

26. *Urges* the international community, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to continue to fund generously the refugee programmes of the Office of the High Commissioner and, taking into account the substantially increased needs of programmes in Africa, to ensure that Africa receives a fair and equitable share of the resources designated for refugees;

27. *Requests* all Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to pay particular attention to meeting the special needs of refugee women and children and displaced persons, including those with special protection needs;

28. *Calls upon* States and the Office of the High Commissioner to make renewed efforts to ensure that the rights, needs and dignity of elderly refugees are fully respected and addressed through appropriate programme activities;

29. *Expresses grave concern* about the plight of internally displaced persons in Africa, calls upon States to take concrete action to pre-empt internal displacement and to meet the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons, recalls in this regard the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[12] and urges the international community, led by relevant United Nations organizations, to contribute generously to national projects and programmes aimed at alleviating the plight of internally displaced persons;

30. *Invites* the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons to continue his ongoing dialogue with Member States and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, in accordance with his mandate, and to include information thereon in his reports to the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly;

31. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, taking fully into account the efforts expended by countries of asylum, under the item entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions", and to present an oral report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2002.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

[12] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

United Nations A/RES/56/136

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 114

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/578)*]

56/136. Assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 49/172 of 23 December 1994, 50/150 of 21 December 1995, 51/73 of 12 December 1996, 52/105 of 12 December 1997, 53/122 of 9 December 1998 and 54/145 of 17 December 1999,

Aware of the fact that the majority of refugees are children and women,

Bearing in mind that unaccompanied refugee minors are among the most vulnerable refugees and the most at risk of neglect, violence, forced military recruitment and sexual assault and therefore require special assistance and care,

Mindful of the fact that the ultimate solution to the plight of unaccompanied minors is their return to and reunification with their families,

Noting the revised Guidelines on Refugee Children issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in May 1994 and the development of an emergency kit to facilitate coordination and enhance the quality of responses to the needs of unaccompanied minors by the Office of the High Commissioner, the United Nations Children's Fund and non-governmental organizations,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Office of the High Commissioner and the United Nations Children's Fund in the identification and tracing of unaccompanied minors, and welcoming their efforts in reunifying families of refugees,

Welcoming the efforts exerted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to reunite refugees with their families,

Noting the efforts of the High Commissioner to ensure the protection of and assistance to refugees, including children and unaccompanied minors, and that further enhanced efforts need to be exerted to this effect,

Recalling the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[1] and the 1951 Convention[2] and 1967 Protocol thereto [3] relating to the Status of Refugees,

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[1] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[3] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[4]

2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict;[5]

3. *Expresses its deep concern* at the continuing plight of unaccompanied refugee minors, and emphasizes once again the urgent need for their early identification and for timely, detailed and accurate information on their number and whereabouts;

4. *Stresses* the importance of providing adequate resources for programmes of identification and tracing of unaccompanied minors;

5. *Calls upon* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in cooperation with other relevant United Nations bodies, to incorporate into its programmes policies that aim at preventing the separation of refugee families, conscious of the importance of family unity;

6. *Calls upon* all Governments, the Secretary-General, the Office of the High Commissioner, all United Nations organizations, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned to exert the maximum effort to assist and protect refugee minors and to expedite the return and reunification with their families of unaccompanied refugee minors;

7. *Urges* the Office of the High Commissioner, all United Nations organizations, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned to take appropriate steps to mobilize resources commensurate with the needs and interests of unaccompanied refugee minors and for their reunification with their families;

8. *Calls upon* all States and other parties to armed conflict to respect international humanitarian law, and in this regard calls upon States parties to respect fully the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949[6] and related instruments, bearing in mind resolution 2 adopted at the twenty-sixth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held at Geneva in December 1995, and to respect the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[1] which accord children affected by armed conflict special protection and treatment;

9. *Condemns* all acts of exploitation of unaccompanied refugee minors, including their use as soldiers or human shields in armed conflict and their forced recruitment into military forces, and any other acts that endanger their safety and personal security;

10. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Children's Fund, other United Nations organizations and other international organizations to mobilize adequate assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors in the areas of relief, education, health and psychological rehabilitation;

11. *Encourages* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in his efforts to raise awareness worldwide and

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[4] A/56/333 and Corr.1.

[5] See A/56/453.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

11. *Encourages* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in his efforts to raise awareness worldwide and mobilize official and public opinion for the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including refugee minors;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution and to give special attention in his report to the girl-child refugee.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 114

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/578)*]

56/137. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office[1] and the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its fifty-second session[2] and the conclusions and decisions contained therein,

Recalling its annual resolutions on the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees adopted since its establishment by the General Assembly,[3]

Expressing its appreciation for the leadership shown by the High Commissioner since he assumed office in January 2001, and commending the staff and implementing partners of the Office of the High Commissioner for the competent, courageous and dedicated manner in which they discharge their responsibilities,

1. *Endorses* the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its fifty-second session;[2]

2. *Welcomes* the fiftieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,[4] notes that the Convention and the 1967 Protocol thereto[5] have continuously served as the cornerstone of the international refugee protection regime, and welcomes in this context the convening of a ministerial meeting of States parties as an expression of their collective commitment to full and effective implementation of the Convention and Protocol and the values they embody;

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 12* (A/56/12).

[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 12A* (A/56/12/Add.1).

[3] Resolution 428 (V).

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[5] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

3. *Reaffirms* that the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol remain the foundation of the international refugee regime and recognizes the importance of their full application by States parties, notes with satisfaction that one hundred and forty-one States are now parties to one or both instruments, encourages the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and States to strengthen their efforts to promote broader accession to those instruments and their full implementation, and underlines in particular the importance of full respect for the principle of non-refoulement;

4. *Notes* that fifty-three States are now parties to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons[6] and that twenty-five States are parties to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness,[7] and encourages the High Commissioner to continue his activities on behalf of stateless persons;

5. *Welcomes* the process of Global Consultations on International Protection launched by the Office of the High Commissioner, and acknowledges their importance as a forum for open discussion on complex legal and operational protection issues;

6. *Reiterates* that international protection is a dynamic and action-oriented function, carried out in cooperation with States and other partners, inter alia, to promote and facilitate the admission, reception and treatment of refugees and to ensure durable, protection-oriented solutions, bearing in mind the particular needs of vulnerable groups;

7. *Re-emphasizes* that the protection of refugees is primarily the responsibility of States, whose full and effective cooperation, action and political resolve are required to enable the Office of the High Commissioner to fulfil its mandated functions;

8. *Urges* all States and relevant non-governmental and other organizations, in conjunction with the Office of the High Commissioner, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden- and responsibility-sharing, to cooperate and to mobilize resources with a view to enhancing the capacity of States and reducing the heavy burden borne by them, in particular by developing countries and countries with economies in transition that have received large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers, and calls upon the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to play its catalytic role in mobilizing assistance from the international community to address the root causes as well as the economic, environmental and social impact of large-scale refugee populations, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

9. *Strongly reaffirms* the fundamental importance and the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the function of the Office of the High Commissioner of providing international protection to refugees and seeking permanent solutions to refugee problems, recalls that these solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country, reaffirming that voluntary repatriation remains the preferred solution, supported by necessary rehabilitation and development assistance, to facilitate sustainable reintegration;

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[6] Ibid., vol. 360, No. 5158.

[7] Ibid., vol. 989, No. 14458.

10. *Emphasizes* the obligation of all States to accept the return of their nationals, calls upon all States to facilitate the return of their nationals who have been determined not to be in need of international protection, and affirms the need for the return of persons to be undertaken in a safe and humane manner and with full respect for their human rights and dignity, irrespective of the status of the persons concerned;

11. *Recognizes* that adequate and timely resources are essential to the High Commissioner to discharge effectively his mandated functions on an equitable basis, and urges Governments and other donors to respond promptly to the global appeal issued by his Office for requirements under its annual programme budget;

12. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner, with that sustained support, to continue to fulfil the mandate conferred upon it by its statute and by subsequent General Assembly resolutions regarding refugees and other persons of concern, in close cooperation with its relevant partners;

13. *Requests* the High Commissioner to report on his activities to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, and to include in his report the results of the Global Consultations on International Protection.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 115

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/579)*]

56/138. The rights of the child

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming all of its resolutions on the rights of the child,[1] in particular resolutions 55/78 and 55/79 of 4 December 2000, and taking note with appreciation of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/75 of 25 April 2001,[2]

Considering the postponement of the special session of the General Assembly on children due to exceptional circumstances,

Welcoming the progress made so far in the preparation of the special session of the General Assembly on children, including its outcome document, and reaffirming that the Assembly, at its special session, while reviewing the achievements in the implementation and results of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s, adopted by the World Summit for Children, held in New York on 29 and 30 September 1990,[3] will make a renewed commitment and consider future action for children in the forthcoming decade,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "We the children: end-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children"[4] and the reports of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child[5] and on children and armed conflict,[6] as well as the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict;[7]

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[1] Resolutions 50/153, 51/77, 52/107, 53/128 and 54/149.

[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[3] A/45/625, annex.

[4] A/S-27/3.

[5] A/56/203.

[6] A/56/342-S/2001/852.

[7] See A/56/453.

2. *Welcomes* the fact that, as at 18 October 2001, ten States had become parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,[8] thereby allowing it to enter into force on 18 January 2002, and that, as at 12 November 2001, ten States had become parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict,[9] thereby allowing it to enter into force on 12 February 2002;

3. *Welcomes also* the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,[10] as well as the large number of ratifications of International Labour Organization Convention No. 138, concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Convention No. 182, concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour;

4. *Welcomes* the convening of the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children at Yokohama, Japan, from 17 to 20 December 2001, and the regional consultative meetings for its preparation, and invites Member States and observers to ensure their participation in the Congress at a high political level;

5. *Decides*:

(*a*) To request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a report on the rights of the child, containing information on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto;

(*b*) To request the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to submit to the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights reports containing relevant information on the situation of children affected by armed conflict, bearing in mind the existing mandates and reports of relevant bodies;

(*c*) To request the Secretary-General to conduct an in-depth study on the question of violence against children, taking into account the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on children, and to put forward recommendations for consideration by Member States for appropriate action, including effective remedies and preventive and rehabilitative measures;

(*d*) To revert to its comprehensive consideration of this question at its fifty-seventh session under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children".

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

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[8] Resolution 54/263, annex II.

[9] Ibid., annex I.

[10] Resolution 55/25, annex II.

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 115

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/579)*]

56/139. The girl child

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/78 of 4 December 2000 and all relevant resolutions, including the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Recalling also all relevant United Nations conferences and the Declaration and Agenda for Action adopted by the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held at Stockholm from 27 to 31 August 1996,[1] as well as the outcome documents of the recent five-year reviews of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[2] and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[3]

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care and in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, incest, early marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Recognizing the need to achieve gender equality so as to ensure a just and equitable world for girls,

Deeply concerned that, in situations of poverty, war and armed conflict, girl children are among the victims most affected and that thus their potential for full development is limited,

Concerned that the girl child has furthermore become a victim of sexually transmitted diseases and the human immunodeficiency virus, which affect the quality of her life and leave her open to further discrimination,

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[1] A/51/385, annex.

[2] Resolution S-21/2, annex.

[3] Resolution S-24/2, annex.

Reaffirming the equal rights of women and men as enshrined, inter alia, in the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[4] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[5]

Reaffirming also the political declaration[6] and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[7] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",

Reaffirming further the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum,[8]

Reaffirming the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session,[9]

1. *Stresses* the need for full and urgent implementation of the rights of the girl child as guaranteed to her under all human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child[5] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[4] as well as the need for universal ratification of those instruments;

2. *Urges* States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;[10]

3. *Welcomes* the adoption of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict[11] and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,[12] and invites States to consider signing and ratifying the Optional Protocols as a matter of priority with a view to their entry into force as soon as possible;

4. *Welcomes also* the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative launched by the Secretary-General at the World Education Forum;

5. *Urges* all Governments and the United Nations system to strengthen efforts bilaterally and with international organizations and private sector donors in order to achieve the goals of the World Education Forum, in particular that of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and to implement the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative as a means of reaching this goal, and reaffirms the commitment contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;[13]

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[4] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[5] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[6] Resolution S-23/2, annex.

[7] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

[8] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000* (Paris, 2000).

[9] Resolution S-26/2, annex.

[10] Resolution 54/4, annex.

[11] Resolution 54/263, annex I.

[12] Ibid., annex II.

[13] See resolution 55/2.

6. *Calls upon* all States to take measures to address the obstacles that continue to affect the achievement of the goals set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action,[14] as contained in paragraph 33 of the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[7] where appropriate, including the strengthening of national mechanisms to implement policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, to enhance coordination among responsible institutions for the realization of the human rights of girls, as indicated in the further actions and initiatives;

7. *Urges* all States to take all necessary measures and to institute legal reforms to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, to take effective action against violations of those rights and freedoms and to base programmes and policies for the girl child on the rights of the child;

8. *Urges* States to enact and enforce strictly laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, to enact and enforce strictly laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

9. *Urges* all States to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as the commitment to implement the Beijing Platform for Action;

10. *Also urges* all States to enact and enforce legislation to protect girls from all forms of violence, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation, rape, domestic violence, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography, and to develop age-appropriate safe and confidential programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence;

11. *Calls upon* all States and international and non-governmental organizations, individually and collectively, to implement further the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular the strategic objectives relating to the girl child and including the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

12. *Urges* States to take special measures for the protection of war-affected girls and in particular to protect them from sexually transmitted diseases, such as human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and gender-based violence, including rape and sexual abuse, torture, sexual exploitation, abduction and forced labour, paying special attention to refugee and displaced girls, and to take into account the special needs of the war-affected girl child in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes;

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[14] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

13. *Urges* all States and the international community to respect, protect and promote the rights of the child, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of the girl child in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations, and calls for special initiatives designed to address all of the rights and needs of war-affected girls;

14. *Welcomes* the holding of the International Conference on War-Affected Children at Winnipeg, Canada, from 10 to 17 September 2000, and takes note with appreciation of the Winnipeg Agenda for War-Affected Children;[15]

15. *Urges* States to formulate comprehensive, multidisciplinary and coordinated national plans, programmes or strategies to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, which should be widely disseminated and should provide targets and timetables for implementation, as well as effective domestic enforcement procedures through the establishment of monitoring mechanisms involving all parties concerned, including consultations with women's organizations, giving attention to the recommendations relating to the girl child of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

16. *Calls upon* Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and the full respect for and enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination,[16] to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, take into account the rights and the particular needs of the girl child in the country programme of cooperation in accordance with the national priorities, including through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;[17]

18. *Requests* all human rights treaty bodies, special procedures and other human rights mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and its Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights to adopt regularly and systematically a gender perspective in the implementation of their mandates and to include in their reports information on the qualitative analysis of violations of the human rights of women and girls, and encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination in that regard;

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[15] A/55/467-S/2000/973, annex.

[16] Formerly known as the Administrative Committee on Coordination (see Economic and Social Council decision 2001/321 of 24 October 2001).

[17] See A/53/226, paras. 72–77, and A/53/226/Add.1, paras. 88–98.

19. *Calls upon* States and international and non-governmental organizations to mobilize all necessary resources, support and efforts to realize the goals, strategic objectives and actions set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

20. *Stresses* the importance of a substantive assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with a life-cycle perspective so as to identify gaps and obstacles in the implementation process and to develop further actions for the achievement of the goals of the Platform;

21. *Welcomes* the convening of the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, at Yokohama, Japan, from 17 to 20 December 2001, and the regional consultative meetings for the preparation thereof, which aim to review the progress made in implementing the Declaration and Agenda for Action adopted by the first World Congress[1] and to strengthen actions to eradicate commercial sexual exploitation of children, and invites Member States and observers to ensure their representation at the Second World Congress at a high political level;

22. *Encourages* the regional commissions and other regional organizations to carry out activities in support of the Second World Congress;

23. *Stresses* the importance of integrating a gender perspective and of considering the needs and rights of the girl child in the work of the special session of the General Assembly on children.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 116

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/580)*]

56/140. International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/80 of 4 December 2000 and previous resolutions on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Recalling also its resolution 40/131 of 13 December 1985, by which it established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations,

Recalling further that the goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health, and that the theme of the Decade is "Indigenous people: partnership in action",

Welcoming, in this respect, the contribution made through the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held at Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 7 September 2001, to the realization of the goals of the Decade,

Welcoming also the appointment of a special rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, with the mandate spelled out in Commission resolution 2001/57 of 24 April 2001,[1]

Recognizing the importance of consultation and cooperation with indigenous people in planning and implementing the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,[2] the need for adequate financial support from the international community, including support from within the United Nations system, and the need for adequate coordination and communication channels,

Urging all parties to continue to intensify their efforts to achieve the goals of the Decade,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[2] Resolution 50/157, annex.

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;[3]

2. *Affirms its conviction* of the value and diversity of the cultures and forms of social organization of indigenous people and its conviction that the development of indigenous people within their countries will contribute to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental advancement of all the countries of the world;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of strengthening the human and institutional capacity of indigenous people to develop their own solutions to their problems;

4. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as coordinator for the Decade:

(*a*) To continue to promote the objectives of the Decade, taking into account, in the fulfilment of her functions, the special concerns of indigenous people;

(*b*) To give due regard to the dissemination, from within existing resources and voluntary contributions, of information on the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous people and, in that context, to consider the possibility of organizing projects, special events, exhibitions and other activities addressed to the public, in particular to young people;

(*c*) To submit, through the Secretary-General, an annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade;

5. *Reaffirms* the adoption of a declaration on the rights of indigenous people as a major objective of the Decade, and underlines the importance of effective participation by indigenous representatives in the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with developing a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, established pursuant to Commission resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995;[4]

6. *Welcomes* Economic and Social Council decision 2001/316 of 26 July 2001 concerning the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues;

7. *Encourages* Governments to support the Decade by:

(*a*) Preparing relevant programmes, plans and reports in relation to the Decade, in consultation with indigenous people;

(*b*) Seeking means, in consultation with indigenous people, of giving indigenous people greater responsibility for their own affairs and an effective voice in decisions on matters that affect them;

(*c*) Establishing national committees or other mechanisms involving indigenous people to ensure that the objectives and activities of the Decade are planned and implemented on the basis of full partnership with indigenous people;

(*d*) Contributing to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;

(*e*) Contributing, together with other donors, to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations in order to assist indigenous representatives in

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[3] A/56/206.

[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/1995/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

participating in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people;

(*f*) Considering contributing, as appropriate, to the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, in support of the goals of the Decade;

(*g*) Identifying resources for activities designed to implement the goals of the Decade, in cooperation with indigenous people and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

8. *Invites* United Nations financial and development institutions, operational programmes and the specialized agencies and secretariats, as well as other regional and international organizations, in accordance with the existing procedures of their governing bodies:

(*a*) To give increased priority and resources to improving the conditions of indigenous people, with particular emphasis on the needs of those people in developing countries, including through the preparation of specific programmes of action for the implementation of the goals of the Decade, within their areas of competence;

(*b*) To launch special projects, through appropriate channels and in cooperation with indigenous people, to strengthen their community-level initiatives and to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise among indigenous people and other relevant experts;

(*c*) To designate focal points for the coordination of activities related to the Decade with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

and commends those institutions, programmes, agencies and regional and international organizations that have already done so;

9. *Decides* that the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations should also be used to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations in attending, as observers, the sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues;

10. *Appeals* to all Governments and organizations to consider contributing to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, if possible with a substantial increase in the level of contributions;

11. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General ensure coordinated follow-up to the recommendations concerning indigenous people of relevant United Nations conferences, namely, the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June 1992, the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995, the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held at Istanbul, Turkey, from 3 to 14 June 1996, and the World Food Summit, held at Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996, and other relevant international conferences;

12. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit, through the Secretary-General, a report on the implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session;

13. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session the item entitled "Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People".

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 118

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/582)*]

56/141. Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance, for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights, of the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and embodied in the International Covenants on Human Rights,[1] as well as in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960,

Welcoming the progressive exercise of the right to self-determination by peoples under colonial, foreign or alien occupation and their emergence into sovereign statehood and independence,

Deeply concerned at the continuation of acts or threats of foreign military intervention and occupation that are threatening to suppress, or have already suppressed, the right to self-determination of sovereign peoples and nations,

Expressing grave concern that, as a consequence of the persistence of such actions, millions of people have been and are being uprooted from their homes as refugees and displaced persons, and emphasizing the urgent need for concerted international action to alleviate their condition,

Recalling the relevant resolutions regarding the violation of the right of peoples to self-determination and other human rights as a result of foreign military intervention, aggression and occupation adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-seventh[2] and previous sessions,

Reaffirming its previous resolutions on the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, including resolution 55/85 of 4 December 2000,

Reaffirming also its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, containing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which, inter alia, upholds the right to self-determination of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation,

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[1] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the right of peoples to self-determination,[3]

1. *Reaffirms* that the universal realization of the right of all peoples, including those under colonial, foreign and alien domination, to self-determination is a fundamental condition for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights and for the preservation and promotion of such rights;

2. *Declares its firm opposition* to acts of foreign military intervention, aggression and occupation, since these have resulted in the suppression of the right of peoples to self-determination and other human rights in certain parts of the world;

3. *Calls upon* those States responsible to cease immediately their military intervention in and occupation of foreign countries and territories and all acts of repression, discrimination, exploitation and maltreatment, in particular the brutal and inhuman methods reportedly employed for the execution of those acts against the peoples concerned;

4. *Deplores* the plight of millions of refugees and displaced persons who have been uprooted as a result of the aforementioned acts, and reaffirms their right to return to their homes voluntarily in safety and honour;

5. *Requests* the Commission on Human Rights to continue to give special attention to the violation of human rights, especially the right to self-determination, resulting from foreign military intervention, aggression or occupation;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on this question to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session under the item entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination".

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

[3] A/56/295.

United Nations A/RES/56/142

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 118

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/582)*]

56/142. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Aware that the development of friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, is among the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as defined in the Charter,

Recalling the International Covenants on Human Rights,[1] the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples[3] and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[4]

Recalling also the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,[5]

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[6]

Expressing hope for an immediate resumption of negotiations within the Middle East peace process on its agreed basis and for the speedy achievement of a final settlement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides,

Affirming the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders,

1. *Reaffirms* the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State;

2. *Expresses the hope* that the Palestinian people will soon be exercising their right to self-determination, which is not subject to any veto, in the current peace process;

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[1] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[2] Resolution 217 A (III).
[3] Resolution 1514 (XV).
[4] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[5] See resolution 50/6.
[6] See resolution 55/2.

3. *Urges* all States and the specialized agencies and the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in their quest for self-determination.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 119 (*a*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/583/Add.1)*]

56/143. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

The General Assembly,

Recalling article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[3] and its resolution 39/46 of 10 December 1984, by which it adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and all its subsequent relevant resolutions,

Recalling that freedom from torture is a right that must be protected under all circumstances, including in times of internal or international disturbance or armed conflict,

Recalling also that the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, firmly declared that efforts to eradicate torture should, first and foremost, be concentrated on prevention and called for the early adoption of an optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which is intended to establish a preventive system of regular visits to places of detention,

Urging all Governments to promote the speedy and full implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[4] in particular the section relating to freedom from torture, in which it is stated that States should abrogate legislation leading to impunity for those responsible for grave violations of human rights, such as torture, and prosecute such violations, thereby providing a firm basis for the rule of law,

Recalling its resolution 36/151 of 16 December 1981, in which it noted with deep concern that acts of torture took place in various countries, recognized the need

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] Resolution 3452 (XXX), annex.

[4] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

to provide assistance to the victims in a purely humanitarian spirit and established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture,

Recalling also the recommendation contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that high priority should be given to providing the necessary resources to assist victims of torture and effective remedies for their physical, psychological and social rehabilitation, inter alia, through additional contributions to the Fund,

Noting with satisfaction the existence of a considerable international network of centres for the rehabilitation of victims of torture, which plays an important role in providing assistance to victims of torture, and the collaboration of the Fund with the centres,

Commending the persistent efforts by non-governmental organizations to combat torture and to alleviate the suffering of victims of torture,

Mindful of its proclamation, in its resolution 52/149 of 12 December 1997, of 26 June as the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture,

1. *Condemns* all forms of torture, including through intimidation, as described in article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;[5]

2. *Stresses* that all allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment should be promptly and impartially examined by the competent national authority, that those who encourage, order, tolerate or perpetrate acts of torture must be held responsible and severely punished, including the officials in charge of the place of detention at which the prohibited act is found to have taken place, and that national legal systems should ensure that the victims of such acts obtain redress, are awarded fair and adequate compensation and receive appropriate social and medical rehabilitation;

3. *Recalls* the Principles on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,[6] and strongly encourages Governments to reflect upon the Principles as a useful tool in efforts to combat torture;

4. *Notes with appreciation* that one hundred and twenty-six States have become parties to the Convention;

5. *Urges* all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention as a matter of priority;

6. *Invites* all States ratifying or acceding to the Convention and those States that are parties to the Convention and have not yet done so to consider joining the States parties that have made the declarations provided for in articles 21 and 22 of the Convention and to consider the possibility of withdrawing their reservations to article 20;

7. *Urges* all States parties to the Convention to notify the Secretary-General of their acceptance of the amendments to articles 17 and 18 of the Convention as soon as possible;

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[5] Resolution 39/46, annex.

[6] Resolution 55/89, annex.

8. *Urges* States parties to comply strictly with their obligations under the Convention, including, in view of the high number of reports not submitted, their obligation to submit reports in accordance with article 19 of the Convention, and invites States parties to incorporate a gender perspective and information concerning children and juveniles when submitting reports to the Committee against Torture;

9. *Emphasizes* the obligation of States parties under article 10 of the Convention to ensure education and training for personnel who may be involved in the custody, interrogation or treatment of any individual subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment;

10. *Stresses*, in this context, that States must not punish personnel referred to in paragraph 9 above for not obeying orders to commit or conceal acts amounting to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

11. *Calls upon* all Governments to take appropriate effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent and prohibit the production, trade, export and use of equipment that is specifically designed to inflict torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;

12. *Welcomes* the work of the Committee, and takes note of the report of the Committee,[7] submitted in accordance with article 24 of the Convention;

13. *Acknowledges* the number of reports and communications awaiting consideration by the Committee, and in this regard decides to authorize the Committee to establish a pre-sessional working group composed of four of its members to meet for a five-day session during the week preceding each session of the Committee, and invites the Committee to continue to enhance its methods of work;

14. *Calls upon* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in conformity with her mandate established in General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, to continue to provide, at the request of Governments, advisory services for the preparation of national reports to the Committee and for the prevention of torture, as well as technical assistance in the development, production and distribution of teaching material for these purposes;

15. *Urges* States parties to take fully into account the conclusions and recommendations made by the Committee after its consideration of their reports;

16. *Welcomes* the progress made by the open-ended working group of the Commission on Human Rights on a draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and urges the working group to complete as soon as possible a final text for submission to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, for consideration and adoption;

17. *Takes note with appreciation* of the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of torture,[8] describing the overall trends and developments with regard to his mandate, and encourages the Special Rapporteur to continue to include in his recommendations proposals on the prevention and investigation of torture;

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[7] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 44* (A/56/44).

[8] See A/56/156.

18. *Invites* the Special Rapporteur to continue to examine questions of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment directed against women, and conditions conducive to such torture, and to make appropriate recommendations for the prevention and redress of gender-specific forms of torture, including rape or any other form of sexual violence, and to exchange views with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, with the aim of enhancing further their effectiveness and mutual cooperation;

19. *Also invites* the Special Rapporteur to continue to consider questions relating to the torture of children and conditions conducive to such torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and to make appropriate recommendations for the prevention of such torture;

20. *Calls upon* Governments to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of his or her task, to provide all necessary information requested by the Special Rapporteur, to respond appropriately and expeditiously to the urgent appeals of the Special Rapporteur and to give serious consideration to requests by the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries, and urges them to enter into a constructive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur in following up his or her recommendations;

21. *Reiterates* the need for the Special Rapporteur to be able to respond effectively, in particular to urgent appeals, to credible and reliable information that comes before him or her, and invites the Special Rapporteur to continue to seek the views and comments of all concerned, in particular Member States;

22. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to continue to consider including in his or her reports information on the follow-up by Governments to his or her recommendations, visits and communications, including progress made and problems encountered;

23. *Stresses* the need for the continued regular exchange of views among the Committee, the Special Rapporteur and other relevant United Nations mechanisms and bodies, as well as for the pursuance of cooperation with relevant United Nations programmes, notably the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, with a view to enhancing further their effectiveness and cooperation on issues relating to torture, inter alia, by improving their coordination;

24. *Expresses its gratitude and appreciation* to the Governments, organizations and individuals that have contributed to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture;

25. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the Board of Trustees of the Fund, and appeals to all Governments and organizations to contribute annually to the Fund, preferably by 1 March prior to the annual meeting of the Board, if possible with a substantial increase in the level of contributions, so that consideration may be given to the ever-increasing demand for assistance;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to all Governments the appeals of the General Assembly for contributions to the Fund and to continue to include the Fund on an annual basis among the programmes for which funds are pledged at the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities;

27. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to assist the Board of Trustees of the Fund in its appeal for contributions and in its efforts to make better known the existence of the Fund and the financial means currently available to it, as well as in

its assessment of the global need for international funding of rehabilitation services for victims of torture and, in this effort, to make use of all existing possibilities, including the preparation, production and dissemination of information materials;

28. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the provision of adequate staff and facilities for the bodies and mechanisms involved in combating torture and assisting victims of torture, commensurate with the strong support expressed by Member States for combating torture and assisting victims of torture;

29. *Invites* donor countries and recipient countries to consider including in their bilateral programmes and projects relating to the training of armed forces, security forces, prison and police personnel and health-care personnel matters relating to the protection of human rights and the prevention of torture, while bearing in mind a gender perspective;

30. *Calls upon* all Governments, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to commemorate, on 26 June, the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture;

31. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-eighth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a report on the status of the Convention and a report on the operations of the Fund;

32. *Decides* to consider at its fifty-seventh session the reports of the Secretary-General, including the report on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, the report of the Committee against Torture and the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of torture.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 119 (*a*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/583/Add.1)*]

56/144. International Covenants on Human Rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 54/157 of 17 December 1999 and 55/90 of 4 December 2000 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/67 of 26 April 2000,[1]

Mindful that the International Covenants on Human Rights[2] constitute the first all-embracing and legally binding international treaties in the field of human rights and, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[3] form the core of the International Bill of Human Rights,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General[4] on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[2] and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[5]

Recalling the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and reaffirming that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that the promotion and protection of one category of rights should never exempt or excuse States from the promotion and protection of the other rights,

Recognizing the important role of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in examining the progress made by States parties in fulfilling the obligations undertaken in the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in providing recommendations to States parties on their implementation,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[2] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] Resolution 217 A (III).

[4] A/56/178.

[5] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex, and resolution 44/128, annex.

Considering that the effective functioning of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is indispensable for the full and effective implementation of the International Covenants on Human Rights,

Recognizing the importance of regional human rights instruments and monitoring mechanisms in complementing the universal system of promotion and protection of human rights,

1. *Reaffirms* the importance of the International Covenants on Human Rights[2] as major components of international efforts to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General at the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations to invite heads of State and Government to sign, ratify or accede to the International Covenants on Human Rights, and expresses its appreciation to those States that have done so;

3. *Strongly appeals* to all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[2] and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] as well as to accede to the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[3] and to make the declaration provided for in article 41 of the Covenant;

4. *Invites* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to intensify systematic efforts to encourage States to become parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights and, through the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, to assist such States, at their request, in ratifying or acceding to the Covenants and to the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with a view to achieving universal adherence;

5. *Emphasizes* the importance of the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, where applicable, the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

6. *Stresses* the importance of avoiding the erosion of human rights by derogation, and underlines the necessity of strict observance of the agreed conditions and procedures for derogation under article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, bearing in mind the need for States parties to provide the fullest possible information during states of emergency so that the justification for the appropriateness of measures taken in those circumstances can be assessed, and in this regard takes note of General Comment No. 29 adopted by the Human Rights Committee;[4]

7. *Encourages* States parties to consider limiting the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible and to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the relevant treaty;

8. *Also encourages* States parties to review regularly any reservations made in respect of the provisions of the International Covenants on Human Rights and the

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[4] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 40* (A/56/40), vol. I, annex VI.

Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with a view to withdrawing them;

9. *Takes note with appreciation* of the annual reports of the Human Rights Committee submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth[7] and fifty-sixth[8] sessions, and takes note of General Comments Nos. 27,[9] 28[10] and 29[6] adopted by the Committee;

10. *Welcomes* the reports of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on its twentieth and twenty-first sessions[11] and on its twenty-second, twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions,[12] and takes note of General Comments Nos. 11,[13] 12,[14] 13[15] and 14[16] adopted by the Committee;

11. *Urges* States parties to fulfil in good time such reporting obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights as may be requested and to make use in their reports of gender-disaggregated data, and stresses the importance of taking fully into account a gender perspective in the implementation of the Covenants at the national level, including in the national reports of States parties and in the work of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

12. *Calls upon* States parties that have not yet submitted core documents[17] to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to do so, and invites all States parties regularly to review and update their core documents;

13. *Urges* States parties to take duly into account, in implementing the provisions of the International Covenants on Human Rights, the recommendations and observations made during the consideration of their reports by the Human Rights Committee and by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the views adopted by the Human Rights Committee under the first Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

14. *Invites* States parties to give particular attention to the dissemination at the national level of their reports submitted to the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the summary records relating to the examination of those reports by the Committees and the recommendations and observations made by the Committees after the examination of those reports;

15. *Urges* all States to publish the texts of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil

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[7] Ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 40* (A/55/40).

[8] Ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 40* (A/56/40).

[9] Ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 40* (A/55/40), vol. I, annex VI A.

[10] Ibid., annex VI B.

[11] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2* and corrigendum (E/2000/22 and Corr.1).

[12] Ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 2* (E/2001/22).

[13] Ibid., *2000, Supplement No. 2* and corrigendum (E/2000/22 and Corr.1), annex IV.

[14] Ibid., annex V.

[15] Ibid., annex VI.

[16] Ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 2* (E/2001/22), annex IV.

[17] See HRI/CORE/1 and addenda.

and Political Rights in as many local languages as possible and to distribute them and make them known as widely as possible in their territories,

16. *Urges* each State party to translate, publish and make widely available in its territory by appropriate means the full text of the concluding observations on its reports to the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

17. *Reiterates* that States parties should take into account, in their nomination of members to the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, that the Committees shall be composed of persons of high moral character and recognized competence in the field of human rights, consideration being given to the usefulness of the participation of some persons having legal experience, and that members serve in their personal capacity, and also reiterates that, in the elections of the Committees, consideration shall be given to equitable geographical distribution of membership and to the representation of the different forms of civilization and of the principal legal systems,

18. *Invites* the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, when considering the reports of States parties, to continue to identify specific needs that might be addressed by United Nations departments, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, including through the advisory services and technical assistance programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

19. *Stresses* the need for improved coordination among relevant United Nations mechanisms and bodies in supporting States parties, upon their request, in implementing the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and encourages continued efforts in this direction,

20. *Takes note* of the adoption by the Human Rights Committee of its revised rules of procedure,[9] and welcomes the efforts of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regularly to review their working methods in order to increase their efficiency and effectiveness,

21. *Welcomes* the meeting between the Human Rights Committee and States parties, held on 30 October 2000, to exchange ideas on how to render the working methods of the Committee more efficient, expresses appreciation for the decision of the Committee to organize similar consultations in 2002, and encourages all States parties to continue to contribute to the dialogue with practical and concrete proposals and ideas on ways to improve the effective functioning of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

22. *Also welcomes* the continuing efforts of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to strive for uniform standards in the implementation of the provisions of the International Covenants on Human Rights, and appeals to other bodies dealing with similar human rights questions to respect those uniform standards, as expressed in the general comments of the Committees,

23. *Stresses* the need for further efforts towards developing indicators and benchmarks to measure progress in the national implementation by States parties of

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[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/56/40), vol. I, annex III B.*

the rights protected by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

24. *Welcomes* Economic and Social Council decision 2001/220 of 4 June 2001, in which the Council authorized the appointment by the Commission on Human Rights of an independent expert to examine the question of a draft optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and invites the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to consider contributing to the work of the independent expert;

25. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to assist States parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights in the preparation of their reports, including by convening seminars or workshops at the national level for the training of government officials engaged in the preparation of such reports and by exploring other possibilities available under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights effectively assists the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the implementation of their respective mandates by providing, inter alia, adequate Secretariat staff resources and conference and other relevant support services;

27. *Decides* to endorse the request by the Human Rights Committee to hold an additional week of meetings at Geneva in 2002 in order to reduce further the existing backlog;

28. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General, taking into account the suggestions of the Human Rights Committee, to take determined steps, in particular through the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, to give more publicity to the work of that Committee and, similarly, to the work of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, under the item entitled "Human rights questions", a report on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including all reservations and declarations.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001